

Arizona Early Intervention Program

AzEIP Technical Assistance Bulletin # 2

“Service Coordination”

34 CFR §303.23

Introduction:

Service coordination is an important component of the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP). It is identified in Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) as one of the four major functions in a state-wide system that must be carried out at public expense. (See Appendix for the federal definition of service coordination.)

Many times, service coordinators provide the first contact with families and set the stage to promote the primary mission of AzEIP, which is to “enhance the capacity of families to support their infants and toddlers with delays or disabilities to thrive in their homes and communities.”

The service coordinator plays an integral role on the team that supports families and children. The service coordinator has diverse roles to play and needs skills in many areas. This document is intended to detail the technical requirements of the position. However, AzEIP’s focus on family-centered services must also be a primary consideration in the skill set of a service coordinator.

Background:

Such emphasis has been placed on service coordination in the AzEIP system because it is critically important for families, who may be learning for the first time about their child’s delay or disability, to have quality interactions with and information about the early intervention system. This is one of the primary roles of the service coordinator.

The service coordinator has a great deal of influence on the family’s perceptions and understanding of the early intervention system, and of their child’s disability and the possibilities for his or her future. The quality of service coordination may also have an impact on the family’s perceptions of the services and supports they receive through AzEIP.

AzEIP Service Coordination Qualifications and Functions

(From DES/AzEIP Personnel Standards)

A. Qualifications:

Requirements:

Qualifications for Service Coordinators:

- Bachelor's degree in human service or closely related field¹; and
- Completion of the AzEIP Standards of Practice for Service Coordinators within three years of employment. (For more information about the Standards of Practice, go to www.nau.edu/ihd/asdtp.)

Supervision:

- A Service Coordinator who has completed the AzEIP Standards of Practice may supervise Early Intervention Assistants, in accordance with state license regulations, if applicable.
- As part of their ongoing, continuous professional development, Service Coordinators receive regular and reflective supervision and/or colleague support as specified in the conditions of their employment or contracts.

Continuing Education:

While contracted or employed as Service Coordinators, individuals shall maintain active and on-going professional development activities, as required and supported under their current contracts or employment with an AzEIP service providing agency.²

B. Functions:

A Service Coordinator is designated or authorized by the participating AzEIP agency, through employment or contract:

- To determine or authorize agency eligibility;
- To access and authorize the provision of agency supports and services;

¹ Exceptions to this policy may apply to hires prior to July 1, 2001. See AzEIP Federal Application for Federal Funds Under Part C of IDEA.

² The AzEIP service providing agencies include: Department of Economic Security/Division of Developmental Disabilities, Department of Economic Security/Arizona Early Intervention Program, Arizona Department of Health Services, Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs and Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

- To provide on-going contact and support to families and children during on-going service delivery and during transitions in service delivery.

As identified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004, Part C, CFR § 303.23 (b), service coordination activities shall include:

- coordinating the process of evaluations and assessments to determine initial and on-going eligibility;
- participating in the development of the initial IFSP;
- facilitating 6-month reviews and annual evaluations of Individualized Family Service Plans and transition plans;
- assisting families in identifying available agency and community supports and services;
- coordinating and monitoring the delivery of available services;
- informing families of the availability of advocacy services;
- coordinating with community resources, medical and health providers;
- and facilitating the development of a transition plan for preschool services, if appropriate.

Referral and Eligibility Determination

Service coordination and the activities of a service coordinator begin at the time of referral. The service coordinator will document activities on behalf of the family during the Initial Planning Process, either through contact notes or on a service coordination log. A sample log is attached to this TAB and is discussed further in the “Documentation” section.

IFSP and On-going Service Delivery

There can be (although not required) outcomes identified by the family and IFSP team requiring assistance from the service coordinator. The Child and Family Outcomes pages of the IFSP might include an outcome for service coordination.

An example of a service coordination outcome is:

Child/Family Desired Outcome # 1	
<u>Date</u> 7/1/05	What does your family want to see happen or changed as a result of early intervention and how will we know we've made progress? (include timelines) Mrs. Jones will complete her applications for WIC, SSI and AHCCCS by the end of the June.
<u>Date</u> 7/1/05	What is happening now related to this outcome? (including child and/or family resources and concerns)

	Mrs. Jones has called the main telephone numbers but has not been able to reach a person to assist her.		
Date 7/1/05	Ideas/activities (things we are/will do to make this happen) -provide phone numbers to Mrs. Jones for each agency -identify contact person in each agency -assist with identifying all required documentation needed -assist with filling out forms and making copies for Mrs. Jones' records -assist with delivery of applications in a timely manner -assist with any follow-up that is needed to complete process	People (who will teach, learn, do) Mrs. Jones Service Coordinator, Bill Smith	Natural Environments (activity settings or places to learn/do) Home WIC office SSI office AHCCCS office

There are many other possible situations when a service coordinator may be identified as the person “who will teach, learn, do”. For example, the service coordinator might be identified as the one who will work with the family to identify playgroups for toddlers within the community; a service coordinator may be listed as the team member who will help the family access nutritional services; or the service coordinator may be listed as the person who will connect the family to a parent support group.

The “service” of service coordination needs to be listed on the “Supports and Services” page of the IFSP (even if there is no outcome identified). The item “How often and how long” will be determined through conversations with the family about their service coordination needs. Best practice recommends that service coordinators have at least monthly contact with the family. Document the amount of time that seems appropriate according to individual family needs. If, during the implementation of the IFSP, this amount changes significantly, a revision to the IFSP will be needed. The outcomes would be reviewed and updated just as any other outcome for any other service.

Documentation

Documentation of service coordination activities is **CRITICAL**. Activities must be recorded and maintained in the child’s file (or electronically). Attached is a sample service coordination log that can be used to document service coordination activities. Both phone contact and face-to-face contact for service coordination purposes should be documented. If a form or format other than the attached is used, the following information is recommended to be included in the documentation:

1. The name of the child receiving the service
2. The date the service was provided
3. The name of the provider agency
4. The name of the service coordinator providing the service
5. The location in which the service was provided

6. The type of service coordination service provided (i.e., coordinating with community resources, planning for 6 month or annual updates, advocacy, transition planning, etc.)
7. The amount of time the service was provided to the nearest quarter of an hour

Additional Considerations

Several functions of a service coordinator have been found to be in need of improved documentation and tracking through the results of the Program Self Assessments and Site Reviews. These are highlighted here to provide some guidance to service coordinators as they continue to support families in AzEIP.

Coordinating and monitoring the delivery of available services: This includes tracking and monitoring implementation of the early intervention services identified by the IFSP team and listed on the IFSP. The service coordinator remains in contact with the family and service providers and documents in progress notes, service coordination log or other appropriate locations in the child's record that the service(s) are provided in a timely manner in accordance with the **start dates**. In addition, the service coordinator monitors with the family and service providers that the service(s) are provided in accordance with appropriate frequency and duration. This information should be documented, as well as any assistance provided with follow-up when changes or revisions are needed to the IFSP.

Coordination with other community resources: Coordination includes information about other community resources that are used to meet IFSP outcomes on the Services and Supports pages and are updated on progress notes or service coordination logs.

Coordination and documentation of transition planning activities for those children exiting AzEIP at age 3: Each step of the transition process should be documented using the appropriate Transition Planning Forms that were provided through the Transition Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and on the transition pages of the IFSP.

Dual Role

A qualified early intervention professional that provides other direct early intervention services (physical therapy, developmental special instruction, occupational therapy, speech therapy, nursing, social work, etc.) may be selected as a service coordinator, if the AzEIP Personnel Standards and Standards of Practice are met. In these instances, although one person is serving in both roles, the role and activities for service coordination and the other early intervention discipline must be delineated and documented.

Social Worker vs. Service Coordinator

There have been questions about the role of a social worker vs. the role of the service coordinator. A social worker may serve in a role as a service coordinator because he/she meets the AzEIP personnel standards for a service coordinator (Bachelor's degree in a human service or closely related field). However, the reverse is not always true. A professional who meets the AzEIP personnel standards for a service coordinator may or may not meet the personnel standards for a social worker. A service coordinator may not serve in the role of a social worker, unless he/she meets the Az State Licensure requirement for a social worker.

The following table is a side by side comparison of the personnel standards and functions for a service coordinator and a social worker. The identification and coordination of community resources are activities that may be carried out by both a service coordinator and social worker.

Professional	Service Coordinator	Social Worker
Personnel Standard	<p>Bachelor's degree in human service or closely related field; and</p> <p>Completion of the AzEIP Standards of Practice for Service Coordinators within three years of employment.</p>	<p>Bachelor's degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.</p> <p>Hold a current and valid Arizona professional Social Work license.</p>
Functions	<p><u>DES/AzEIP Personnel Standards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To determine or authorize agency eligibility; ▪ To access and authorize the provision of agency supports and services; ▪ To provide on-going contact and support to families and children during on-going service delivery and during transitions in service delivery. As identified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, Part C, CFR § 303.23 (b), service/support coordination activities shall include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ coordinating the process of evaluations and assessments to determine initial and on-going eligibility; ▪ participating in the development of the initial IFSP; ▪ facilitating 6-month reviews and annual evaluations of Individualized Family Service Plans and transition plans; ▪ assisting families in identifying available agency and community supports and services; ▪ coordinating and monitoring the delivery of available services; ▪ informing families of the availability of advocacy services; ▪ coordinating with community resources, medical and health providers; and facilitating the development of a transition plan for preschool services, if appropriate. 	<p><u>34 CFR §303.12(a)(12)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparing a social or emotional developmental assessment of the child within the family context; ▪ Providing individual and family-group counseling with parents and other family members, and appropriate social skill-building activities with the child and parent; ▪ Making home visits to evaluate a child's living conditions and patterns of parent-child interaction; ▪ Working with those problems in a child's and family's living situation (home, community, and any center where early intervention services are provided) that affect the child's maximum utilization of early intervention services; and ▪ Identifying, mobilizing, and coordinating community resources and services to enable the child and family to receive maximum benefit from early intervention services.

Appendix

Federal Definition:

34 CFR §303.23 Service Coordination

(a) General.

- (1) As used in this part, except in Sec. 303.12(d)(11), service coordination means the activities carried out by a service coordinator to assist and enable a child eligible under this part and the child's family to receive the rights, procedural safeguards, and services that are authorized to be provided under the State's early intervention program.
- (2) Each child eligible under this part and the child's family must be provided with one service coordinator who is responsible for--
 - (i) Coordinating all services across agency lines; and
 - (ii) Serving as the single point of contact in helping parents to obtain the services and assistance they need.
- (3) Service coordination is an active, ongoing process that involves—
 - (i) Assisting parents of eligible children in gaining access to the early intervention services and other services identified in the individualized family service plan;
 - (ii) Coordinating the provision of early intervention services and other services (such as medical services for other than diagnostic and evaluation purposes) that the child needs or is being provided;
 - (iii) Facilitating the timely delivery of available services; and
 - (iv) Continuously seeking the appropriate services and situations necessary to benefit the development of each child being served for the duration of the child's eligibility.

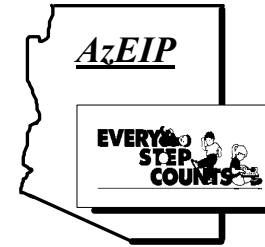
(b) Specific service coordination activities include--

- (1) Coordinating the performance of evaluations and assessments;
- (2) Facilitating and participating in the development, review, and evaluation of individualized family service plans;
- (3) Assisting families in identifying available service providers;
- (4) Coordinating and monitoring the delivery of available services;
- (5) Informing families of the availability of advocacy services;
- (6) Coordinating with medical and health providers; and
- (7) Facilitating the development of a transition plan to preschool services, if appropriate.

(d) Qualifications – Service coordinators must be persons who, consistent with Sec. 303.344(g), have demonstrated knowledge and understanding about--

- (1) Infants and toddlers who are eligible under this part;
- (2) Part C of the Act and the regulations in this part; and the nature and scope of services available under the State's early intervention program, the system of payments for services in the State, and other pertinent information.

Service Coordination Log



Child's Name _____

Page _____

DATE	PLACE OF SERVICE*	START TIME	END TIME	PROGRESS NOTES AND ACTIVIES COMPLETED
DATE	PLACE OF SERVICE+	START TIME	END TIME	PROGRESS NOTES AND ACTIVIES COMPLETED

*Home-H Office/Work-OW Other-O (Indicate in notes) Phone Call-PC

Service Coordinator:_____

Discipline:_____

Agency:_____

Signature:_____

Date:_____